



# North Coast Region Supplementary Feed Options Update 9 January 2019

Given the persisting dry conditions across the far north coast there are many beef producers now beginning to look to supplementary feed cattle again or finish calves off before the weaner sales.

Beef producers on the North Coast are urged to take the time and assess their available feed, stock condition and if you are likely to require a supplementary feed source then call your supplier now to determine availability and price. Most importantly consider the cash flow position of the business and for those looking to supplement ensure you have an idea of what the cattle are worth now and potentially could be worth to ensure there is sufficient margin over feed cost, especially for weaners likely to be sold in the coming months.

If you haven't already, touch base with your preferred agent and discuss the value of your calves now and what they could be worth should you feed and get a bit more weight in them. A calf eating 3kg of grain per head per day from now until the end of March, for example, will eat 210kg and at \$520/T will cost \$120/ head so ensure there is enough margin to justify the potential feed costs.

Below is an updated list of what is commonly used to supplement cattle in the North Coast region, with a current trading price range and most importantly for some, availability.

This list is intended as a guide, so be sure to contact your preferred feed supplier to determine actual price and availability relative to your circumstances.

### Commonly used cattle feed supplements in the North Coast region

Commodity	Availability	Price Range (ex GST)	Comments on Change from last update	General Comments
Cotton Seed Meal	Very Limited, to Not Available	\$650-700/tonne	Availability is the issue	Demand is presently greater than supply. Not likely to change until the cotton harvest kicks off later in the year
Whole White Cotton Seed	Limited	\$600-750/tonne	Less availability	Really restricted to producers who can handle a bulk load. Price includes freight to Casino
Canola Meal	Very Limited	\$540-600/tonne	Very limited still as a lot of canola crops were frosted in the south and didn't make grain	Price Includes freight Casino
Soybean Meal	Available	\$880 – 950/tonne		Very expensive for beef cattle, Protein level high often >47%CP. High rumen degradability meaning usually need to feed more frequently compared to cottonseed meal - seek advice.
Molasses	Becoming limited	\$240/tonne	There's talk that molasses could be imported to meet demand but this is yet to happen on North Coast	Pricing is guide for bulk loads, which is 12T to 25T. Smaller quantities may be available but check pricing.
Liquid supplements (Molasses + Protein)	Available at present	\$0.60 – 0.80/Litre	Holding	Various trade names with different mixtures, contact supplier for exact pricing and freight costs.
Loose Licks (protein based)	Limited	\$800-1,200/tonne	Most have adjusted mixes and have included more urea to compensate for less protein mean	Check urea content and remember that urea supplements are only of benefit if there is adequate fibre present as either paddock feed or provided as hay or silage.
Lick Blocks (Protein Blocks)	Available at present	\$120-140/100kg block	Holding	Smaller blocks more expensive per kg.
Feed Lot meal/pellets	Good at Present	\$520-560/tonne	Holding	Price is for bulk loads. Higher in smaller quantities.

				Various rations around. Contact supplier.
Whole Barley	Available	\$415-440/tonne	Local supplies could be cheaper due to reduced freight	Price includes freight in Bulk load to Lismore/Casino. Freight distance will impact price.
Sorghum	Available	\$360-400/tonne	Seasonal conditions will guide price as the harvest commences	Price includes freight in Bulk load to Lismore/Casino. Freight distance will impact price.
Maize	Variable	\$425-435/tonne	Holding	Price includes freight in Bulk load to Lismore/Casino. Freight distance will impact price. Not much left locally.
Wheaten or Oates Hay	Good	\$480/tonne	Good quality in Large square bales, local supply in round bales likely cheaper	Freight distance is the killer for the best quality in big squares from down south.
Rhodes Grass or Setaria new season cut recently	Good	\$90 x125/4x4bale	Holding	Quality is the big variable factor. The cheaper it is, chances are the quality will be lower therefore need additional supplements.
Silage various options some ryegrass, oats, sorghum or millet around	Good	\$100-150/4x4bale	Holding	Quality is the point to consider and don't forget the dry matter issue. 4x4 round bales typically 45% dry matter which means 55% is water so a 500kg silage bale only has 225kg of feed in it, so calculate how much feed your buying.

Nathan Jennings - Senior Land Services Officer (Agricultural Advice)

0437083147